

**REMARKS**

Applicants have amended the specification to more clearly place the application in condition for allowance.

Reconsideration of the Application is requested.

**The Office Action**

In the specification paragraph [0043] was amended to more precisely define the associative operation as claimed in claims 1, 9 and 18. Specifically, this paragraph was amended to recite "These associative operations (op) have an associative quality in that  $(x \text{ op } y) \text{ op } z = x \text{ op } (y \text{ op } z)$ , and they can include MAXIMUM, MINIMUM, AND and OR." This amendment is supported by the disclosure of the commonly assigned, co-pending patent application U.S. Serial No. 09/721,726 filed November 27, 2000, which issued as US 6,714,694 B1. ("the '694 patent") -- which was incorporated by reference in paragraph [0003] of the application as originally filed. The '694 patent includes this definition of the associative operation in column 2, lines 12-14. Thus, no new matter was added by this amendment.

Further, paragraph [0003] was amended to provide the patent number of the above referenced application incorporated by reference which has since issued.

**CONCLUSION**

For the reasons detailed above, it is submitted all claims remaining in the application (Claims 1-21) are now in condition for allowance. The foregoing amendments do not require unnecessary additional search or examination and meet the requirements of 37 CFR 1.116. Accordingly, Applicant requests that the Examiner admit these Amendments after Final Rejection.

No additional fee is believed to be required for this Amendment. However, the undersigned attorney of record hereby authorizes the charging of any necessary fees, other than the issue fee, to Xerox Deposit Account No. 24-0037.

In the event the Examiner considers personal contact advantageous to the disposition of this case, he/she is hereby authorized to call Patrick D. Floyd, at Telephone Number (216) 861-5582.

Respectfully submitted,

FAY, SHARPE, FAGAN,  
MINNICH & McKEE, LLP

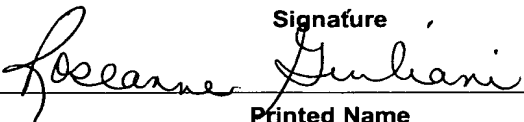
September 9, 2005  
Date

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**CERTIFICATE OF MAILING**

I certify that this Amendment and accompanying document(s) are being

- ☐ deposited with the United States Postal Service as First Class mail under 37 C.F.R. § 1.8, addressed to: MAIL STOP Appeal Brief-Patents, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 on the date indicated below.
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